



Whipscorpions (Vinagaroons) *Order Thelyphonida*

- Also known as Vinagaroons, they are a group of arachnids that are not true scorpions.
- Whipscorpions can be found in dark, humid, or moist microhabitats over many tropical to sub-tropical to arid or semi-arid areas worldwide depending on species.
- These arachnids superficially resemble scorpions, but unlike true scorpions, they lack a telson (or true stinger), and instead have a whip like flagellum at the end of their abdomens. They also have a well defined pair of pedipalps (pincers) like scorpions, and 3 pairs of walking legs.
- Despite their fearsome appearance, whipscorpions are not venomous, but can spray or secrete a vinegar like acidic substance as a defense, hence their other common name, “Vinagaroon”.
- Whipscorpions can attain longevity of 5-10 years or more if cared for correctly.

Size

Depending on the species, whipscorpions can range in size from about 1” to 6”.

Housing

Whipscorpions, or vinagaroons, are secretive, nocturnal arachnids that usually will show aversion to excessive light. They are also more active wanderers than most tarantulas or other commonly kept arachnids, and should be provided with adequate space. Provide a sturdy, secure, and escape proof terrarium or enclosure 5-20 gallons in size with a secure top for one or two adult whipscorpions. These arachnids can be kept communally provided sufficient enclosure space, but may cannibalize if these conditions are not met. Tailless whip scorpions will burrow in 6-8 inches of substrate when provided. Acceptable substrate to use can include slightly moist pesticide free potting soil, cypress mulch, sphagnum moss, Eco-Earth, or bed-a-beast 1-3 inches in depth. Able hiding opportunities for these seclusive arachnids and/or other cage furnishings and hide boxes, cork, or bark slabs, and similar furniture should also be included as well for additional retreats that these nocturnal and secretive arachnids prefer. A fairly small, shallow water dish can also be provided, and should be cleaned regularly. Depending on the species, maintain humidity at 70-90% with some sphagnum moss as well for tropical species, while humidity can be lower at around 65-75% for desert or arid dwelling species.

Whipscorpions do best at room temperature between 65-85 degrees, or with a supplemental under tank heating pad if needed. No additional lighting or heating is necessary for these arachnids.

Feeding/Diet

Whipscorpions will capture any smaller sized prey they can overpower. They will feed on insects, other smaller invertebrates, and even smaller reptiles, amphibians, or newborn rodents. Vinagaroons are very easy and inexpensive to feed in captivity. Feeder crickets, mealworms, waxworms, redworms, feeder roaches, and other feeder insects/invertebrates of appropriate size can be given every 5-7 days. Feeder insects can also be gut loaded to provide additional beneficial nutrients for your scorpion. Uneaten food items after one or more days should be carefully monitored or removed thereafter.

Handling

Despite their fearsome appearance, these whipscorpions do not have fangs, stingers, or venom, but can spray or secrete an irritating vinegar like acidic substance when threatened or

roughly handled. They can be handled, may also give the occasional pinch or nip with their enlarged pedipalps if roughly handled as well. As with most invertebrates, they are also fragile animals, and accidentally dropping one can result in the rupture of its internal organs and/or exoskeleton, causing death to your whipscorpion.

Also be sure to practice basic cleanliness and hygiene associated with proper husbandry after touching or handling any animals or animal enclosures to prevent the possibility of contracting salmonellosis or any other zoonotic pathogens